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The Liar, press

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Sarah Liz James and Becca Keith play twins Isabelle and Sabine, whose identities remain a mystery until the end of the play, along with Tyom Lyver as Cliton in Theatre MSU's production of "The Liar." Costumes, hair and makeup were a joint venture between theatre faculty member Melanie Harris and student designer Amy Fortenberry. (Photo by Melanie Harris)

Theatre MSU presents 'The Liar' at McComas

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A play written by David Ives, "The Liar," and adapted from the comedy by Pierre Corneille, opens today at the McComas Hall Main Stage at 7:30 p.m. The play runs through Saturday. It is presented by the Mississippi State University Department of Communication and Theatre MSU. Admission is \$10.

MSU Theatre Professor and Director Jo Durst said she chose the play because it was a comedy with strong roles for both men and women.

"The Liar" is a modern adaptation of a period piece by the French neoclassical playwright Pierre Corneille," Durst said. "The play exposes our students and audiences to an important part of theatre history."

The play centers around a young man named Dorante who has just moved to Paris and has an interesting flaw, which is that he cannot tell the truth. Soon he meets a manservant named Cliton who cannot tell a lie. Dorante then falls in love with a woman named Clarice who he mistakenly thinks is actually her friend Lucrece. One misunderstanding and lie after another begins to pile up

bringing both delightful antics and comical romance to the audience.

"Because it's been adapted by David Ives, the playwright of 'All In The Timing,' the take on this story of true love and mistaken identity has a thoroughly modern feel," Durst said. "Since Ives has kept the verse intact, I knew this would be a challenge both to myself and our students."

Durst said the costumes and scenery for "The Liar" are great fun as well. The set is designed by Jo's husband and fellow professor Wayne Durst, who said that he and the students have enjoyed the opportunity to design for this unique show.

"This was a great experience for us because it offers our students real experience with neoclassical scenic design elements," Durst said. "It's great to be able to take a style you've discussed in class and then put it on the stage. It's been great fun taking the formality of neoclassical line and form and then twisting them around to reinforce the crookedness of the protagonist."

Costumes and makeup were co-designed and executed by faculty member Melanie Harris and student designer Amy Fortenberry.

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